



## **Adopt, Don't Shop! Choose to Adopt a Pet**

Six to eight million animals enter animal shelters every year. About half of them will find new homes. One obvious reason to adopt a pet is to give a home to an animal that is in need, but there are so many more wonderful reasons to think adoption first when it comes to pets!

Did you know that nationally only about **20%** of all pets were adopted from shelters? And that, on average, **25%** of shelter dogs are purebreds? And that shelter animals are usually spayed/neutered, vaccinated, and microchipped for a low adoption fee? And they are often house trained and ready to be part of a family?

### **How can you help?**

By educating your neighbors, classmates, and friends about **reasons to choose to adopt a pet, benefits of adopting from a shelter or rescue, and drawbacks to choosing to buy pets from puppy mills or breeders**, you can help shelter animals find loving, permanent homes!



### **Research**

Research the **reasons to adopt a pet, benefits of adopting from shelters or rescue groups, and drawbacks to buying pets from puppy mills and breeders**. Some good resources to get started are:

- Loudoun County Animal Care & Control (<http://www.loudoun.gov/animals>)
- The Shelter Pet Project (<http://www.theshelterpetproject.org/>)
- HSUS (<http://www.humanesociety.org/issues/adopt/>)
- Petfinder (<http://www.petfinder.com/>)
- Adopt a Pet (<http://www.adoptapet.com/>)

### **Educate**

Share what you've learned! Make posters and find locations in the community to display them (libraries, community centers, stores, vet offices – be creative). Show photos of adoptable animals from Petfinder.com or Adoptapet.com.

Do a presentation for your school, church group, homeowner's association, scout troop – anywhere! Create a flyer or brochure. Make a website! Write a letter to the editor of a local newspaper.

Be sure to let people know where they can find pets available for adoption. Direct them to visit the Animal Shelter or to go online to Petfinder.com!

### **Report**

Let us know what you have done! Write a report on your project and send it to Animal Care & Control. You'll receive a Certificate of Appreciation and inclusion in our monthly newsletter. Reports should be sent to:

**Laura Rizer, Community Outreach Manager**  
Loudoun County Animal Care & Control  
39820 Charles Town Pike, Waterford, VA 20197  
Email: [Laura.Rizer@loudoun.gov](mailto:Laura.Rizer@loudoun.gov)

Group leaders: be sure to include names for the certificates needed and where they should be sent. Questions should be directed to Laura Rizer at 703-737-8045.